



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Maryland's Social Services Agency



MEDIA ADVISORY

For immediate release:

November 21, 2008

For more information:

Elyn Garrett Jones

410-767-7758

ejones@dhr.state.md.us

SEVERAL WESTERN MARYLAND FAMILIES TO BE HONORED DURING ADOPTION RECOGNITION EVENT

BALTIMORE – November is National Adoption Awareness month adoptive families across Maryland will be honored at an event to be held at the Maryland Zoo in Baltimore on Saturday, November 22, 2008.

“Many of these families have added two or more children to their family,” said Brenda Donald, Secretary of the Department of Human Resources. “We are thankful to them for opening their homes to our children, and want to take this opportunity to help bring attention to the joys of growing families in this manner.”

Allegany, Frederick, Garrett, and Washington counties, all in Western Maryland, have each nominated a family of the year to be honored at the celebration. All four of these counties have met or exceeded their adoption goals for this year – finalizing a total of 71 adoptions.

Janet and Myron Martin are being honored by the Washington County Department of Social Services. Over the last 14 years they have fostered over 25 children and have adopted 5 of them. They have opened their homes to children of all races. Many of them have been sibling groups or have been medically fragile. This year the Martins adopted a medically fragile child that will require life-long care. The Washington County Department of Social Services set a goal to finalize 16 adoptions this fiscal year but far exceeded that with a total of 36 adoptions.

Allegany County DSS has nominated Brett and Michelle Densock as their adoptive parents of the year. The couple adopted have been foster parents since 2001 and adopted two children this year. They have been committed foster parents, always willing to take additional children into their home.

David and Rebecca Heath of Garrett County adopted their second child in December of 2007. They adopted their first child in 2002. Both children are thriving with the Heaths, but David and Rebecca both say that they have benefited more by having the children in their home.

“Each of our adoptive families is special and the children they adopt are fortunate to be a part of their families,” Donald said. “All total, 617 adoptions were finalized this year, with 19 of our 24 counties meeting or exceeding their adoption goals. We are happy to have had this increase in adoptions, but

- Martin O'Malley, Governor
- Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor
- Brenda Donald, Secretary

also recognize that each of the 617 total adoptions represent a positive change in the individual life of a child.”

There were 563 children adopted across Maryland in fiscal year 2007.

Members of the media are asked to contact the Department of Human Resources for additional information on adoption activities in counties across the state.

#

The Maryland Department of Human Resources is the state’s social service provider serving 500,000 people in need each year. The agency collaborates with 24 local jurisdictions to provide foster care, adoption and protective services to children and temporary cash, food stamps and medical assistance to families. It also provides programs for homeless persons, refugees, migrant workers, victims of crime and women who are displaced, battered or assaulted. In terms of its annual budget, DHR is the fourth largest state agency.